

Environmental Assessment

Amelia Island Fishing Access Site Acquisition

November 2007



***Montana Fish,
Wildlife & Parks***

**Amelia Island Fishing Access Site Acquisition
Environmental Assessment
MEPA, NEPA, MCA 23-1-110 CHECKLIST**

PART I. PROPOSED ACTION DESCRIPTION

1. Type of proposed state action:

Fish, Wildlife & Parks is to acquire a 7+ acre donation upstream from the Amelia Island WMA , along the Yellowstone River, to include into the Fishing Access Site program:

2. Agency authority for the proposed action:

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) undertakes this action by authority of MCA 23-1-102, defining FWP powers and duties regarding the acquisition of lands by fee or donation as state historical sites and recreation areas. The department may cooperate with other federal, state or local agencies to acquire, plan, establish, and maintain parks as authorized by MCA 23-1-107.

FWP is authorized by Section 87-1-209 to acquire lands by purchase, gift, or other agreement, or acquire easements upon lands or waters for certain purposes, including public fishing and outdoor recreation. The FWP Commission granted preliminary approval on the conceptual proposed project in September 2007. The proposed project is contingent upon the final consent of the Commission

Section 23-1-110 MCA, or House Bill 495, and the guidelines established in 12.8.604 (ARM) (1) relate to changes in state park and fishing access site features or use patterns. The proposed acquisition will not change site features nor historical use; therefore, Section 23-1-110 MCA is not initiated by the proposed fishing access site acquisition. See Attachment A.

3. Name of project: Amelia Island Fishing Access Site Acquisition

4. Name, address and phone number of project sponsor (if other than the agency): Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks is the project sponsor.

5. If applicable:

Estimated Construction/Commencement Date: not applicable

Estimated Completion Date: prior to April 2008

Current Status of Project Design (% complete): not applicable

6. Location affected by proposed action (county, range and township):

This Seven +acre tract is located at T07N,R36E, 7 acres in NE of lot 7 all located within Treasure County, MT.



Proposed Donation Outline.

7. Project size -- estimate the number of acres that would be directly affected that are currently:

| | <u>Acres</u> | | <u>Acres</u> |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|--------------------|--------------|
| (a) Developed: | | (d) Floodplain | <u>0</u> |
| Residential | <u>0</u> | | |
| Industrial | <u>0</u> | (e) Productive: | |
| | | Irrigated cropland | <u>0</u> |
| (b) Open Space/Woodlands/Recreation | <u>0</u> | Dry cropland | <u>0</u> |
| | | Forestry | <u>0</u> |
| (c) Wetlands/Riparian Areas | <u>7+</u> | | |
| Rangeland | <u>0</u> | Other | <u>0</u> |

8. Listing of any other Local, State or Federal agency that has overlapping or additional jurisdiction.

(a) Permits:

| | |
|--------------------|---------------|
| <u>Agency Name</u> | <u>Permit</u> |
| none | |

(b) Funding:

| | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| <u>Agency Name</u> | <u>Funding Amount</u> |
| FWP (Fishing Access Site Acquisition or license funds) Donation | |
| Total cost to purchase | |

Total cost to accept transfer of Amelia Island FAS will be the cost of Recording Fees and other associated closing costs.

Acceptance of the proposed land donation is contingent upon approval by the FWP Commission.

(c) Other Overlapping or Additional Jurisdictional Responsibilities:

| | |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| <u>Agency Name</u> | <u>Type of Responsibility</u> |
| FWP Commission | approval of acquisition |

9. Narrative summary of the proposed action or project including the benefits and purpose of the proposed action:

Purpose

The purpose of the proposed acquisition is to increase public access along the Yellowstone River. The Yellowstone River is a very popular river for float and bank angling, as well as a variety of recreational uses including floating, swimming, walking, picnicking, and wildlife viewing.

Project and Site Descriptions

The proposed Amelia Island Fishing Access Site is located along the Yellowstone River near the town of Hysham. The property is owned by a local agricultural operator, who proposes to donate this riverfront property (7 acres) to FWP for use as a public fishing access. The proposed site is at a critical location for anglers wishing to float the Yellowstone, with the closest FWP fishing access sites being Myers Bridge FAS located 10 river miles upstream and Rosebud West FAS, located 36 river miles downstream, and is anticipated to receive moderate to heavy angler use. Although FWP owns the adjacent Amelia Island Wildlife Management Area (WMA), the WMA does not offer a suitable site for boat access to the river.

The Yellowstone River has survived as one of the last, large, free flowing rivers in the continental United States. Lack of mainstream impoundments allows spring peak flows and fall and winter low flows to influence a unique ecosystem and aesthetic resource. From the clear, coldwater cutthroat trout fishery in Yellowstone National Park to the warmer water habitat at its mouth, the river supports a variety of aquatic environments that remain relatively undisturbed. The adjacent terrestrial environment, through most of the 550 Montana miles of river, is an impressive cottonwood-willow bottomland. The river has been a major factor in the settlement of southeastern Montana, and retains much cultural and historical significance. Game fish opportunities include brown trout, burbot, channel catfish, mountain whitefish, paddlefish, rainbow trout, sauger, smallmouth bass, walleye, and Yellowstone cutthroat trout

The Montana Natural Heritage Program (MNHP) located four species of concern within this geographic location: two bird species (Greater Sage-grouse and Bald Eagle) and 2 fish species (blue sucker and Sauger). Ownership and management by MFWP would ensure that human use of the proposed FAS would be managed in accordance with regulations that protect habitat and wildlife populations while providing public access. Therefore, it is reasonable to expect that habitat and the diversity of game and non-game animals would improve to a minor degree because of this action.

Proposed Action, Purpose, and Benefits of the Action

There is substantial need for public river access to the Yellowstone River near Hysham. The proposed FAS would be the only FAS on the Yellowstone River between Myers Bridge FAS and Forsyth (46 river miles). The property is also attractive for public use because of its proximity to Hysham, the high quality of the river fishery in the reach, the onsite wildlife habitat, and the history of public use provided by the landowner. In addition, there is a good potential site for development of a boat ramp.

Future Development of the Site

This EA addresses only the acquisition of the proposed FAS and does not evaluate any development on the property. A separate EA would be prepared and made available for public comment in advance of any site development plans. However, it is prudent to discuss long-term plans for the property within this document.

Once MFWP acquires the Amelia Island property, it will be managed as part of the FAS program, which includes about 316 sites statewide. MFWP intends to eventually develop a public boat launching facility at the site. Future development could potentially also include a parking lot, vault latrine, fencing, rock barriers and signage. However no construction will be initiated pending engineering studies and successful completion of the public review process for site development.

If MFWP acquires the proposed FAS, the site will be managed for weeds by the MFWP Region 7 Weed Management Plan. This plan calls for an integrated method of managing weeds, including the use of herbicides.

PART II. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

1. Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives (including the no action alternative) to the proposed action whenever alternatives are reasonably available and prudent to consider and a discussion of how the alternatives would be implemented:

Alternative A: No Action

FWP will not accept the donation. If the site is not acquired by MFWP, there will continue to be a lack of access on a 46-mile section of the Yellowstone River between Myers Bridge FAS and Forsyth.

Preferred Alternative : Proposed Action - FWP to accept the 7+ acre donation and include it into the Fishing Access Program.

The proposed alternative ensures continued access to the Yellowstone River for hundreds of visitors annually. The risk of losing public access at these tracts is very high if FWP passes on this opportunity.

Management of the tract would fall to FWP Region 7 Parks and Wildlife staff.

PART IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

1. Describe the level of public involvement for this project if any, and, given the complexity and the seriousness of the environmental issues associated with the proposed action, is the level of public involvement appropriate under the circumstances?

The public will be notified in the following manners to comment on the Draft EA, the proposed action and alternatives:

- One legal notice in each of these papers: *Helena Independent Record, Miles City Star, Independent Press and Billings Gazette.*
- One press release;
- Public Notice on the Fish, Wildlife & Parks web page: <http://fwp.state.mt.us>

Other possibly interested parties will be notified of the availability of the EA by a mailed postcard.

The opportunities for public input listed above are adequate for the proposed action, since few negative environmental impacts are identified.

2. Duration of comment period, if any.

The public comment period will extend for thirty (30) days following the publication of the legal notice in area newspapers. Written comments will be accepted until 5:00 PM, January 4, 2008, and can be mailed to the address below:

Amelia Island FAS Acquisition
Fish, Wildlife & Parks
PO Box 1630
Miles City, Mt. 59301

Or email comments to: cstewart@mt.gov

PART V. EA PREPARATION

1. Based on the significance criteria evaluated in this EA, is an EIS required?

NO

If an EIS is not required, explain why the EA is the appropriate level of analysis for this proposed action.

This environmental review revealed no significant negative impacts from the proposed action; therefore, an EIS is not necessary and an Environmental Assessment is the appropriate level of analysis. Acquiring the property poses few minor impacts and substantial benefit to the local natural and human environment. The EA process provides adequate protection and opportunity for public review and comment for this action.

2. Name, title, address and phone number of the person(s) responsible for preparing the EA:

Cathy Stewart
FWP
PO Box 1630
Miles City, MT. 59301
406-234-0926

Allan Kuser
Fishing Access Site Coordinator
FWP
Helena, MT 59620-0701
406-444-7885

Scott Denson
Wildlife Biologist
PO Box 1519
Forsyth, Mt. 59327
406-853-1798

3. List of agencies consulted during preparation of the EA:

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
Parks Division
Wildlife Division
Fisheries Division
Lands Division
Natural Resources Information System (NRIS)

PART VI. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CHECKLIST

Evaluation of the impacts of the Proposed Action including secondary and cumulative impacts on the Physical and Human Environment.

A. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

| 1. <u>LAND RESOURCES</u> Will the proposed action result in: | IMPACT * | | | | Can Impact Be Mitigated * | Comment Index |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|------|---------|-------------------------|---------------------------|---------------|
| | Unknown * | None | Minor * | Potentially Significant | | |
| a. Soil instability or changes in geologic substructure? | | X | | | | 1a. |
| b. Disruption, displacement, erosion, compaction, moisture loss, or over-covering of soil, which would reduce productivity or fertility? | | x | | | | |
| c. Destruction, covering or modification of any unique geologic or physical features? | | X | | | | |
| d. Changes in siltation, deposition or erosion patterns that may modify the channel of a river or stream or the bed or shore of a lake? | | X | | | | |
| e. Exposure of people or property to earthquakes, landslides, ground failure, or other natural hazard? | | X | | | | |
| f. Other: | | X | | | | |

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

1a. The proposed action is to acquire the tracts by fee title through donation, upon which they would be managed as undeveloped sites. No impacts to soil stability or geologic substructure are anticipated from this level of action.

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

*** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

**** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

| 2. <u>AIR</u> Will the proposed action result in: | IMPACT * | | | | Can Impact Be Mitigated * | Comment Index |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|------|---------|----------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------|
| | Unknown * | None | Minor * | Potentially Significant | | |
| a. *Emission of air pollutants or deterioration of ambient air quality? (Also see 13 (c).) | | X | | | | |
| b. Creation of objectionable odors? | | X | | | | |
| c. Alteration of air movement, moisture, or temperature patterns or any change in climate, either locally or regionally? | | X | | | | |
| d. Adverse effects on vegetation, including crops, due to increased emissions of pollutants? | | X | | | | |
| e. Will the project result in any discharge, which will conflict with federal or state air quality regs? (Also see 2a.) | | X | | | | |
| f. Other: | | X | | | | |

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Air Resources (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

- * Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.
- ** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).
- *** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.
- **** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

| 3. <u>WATER</u> Will the proposed action result in: | IMPACT * | | | | Can Impact Be Mitigated* | Comment Index |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|------|---------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------|
| | Unknown * | None | Minor * | Potentially Significant | | |
| a. *Discharge into surface water or any alteration of surface water quality including but not limited to temperature, dissolved oxygen or turbidity? | | X | | | | |
| b. Changes in drainage patterns or the rate and amount of surface runoff? | | X | | | | |
| c. Alteration of the course or magnitude of floodwater or other flows? | | X | | | | |
| d. Changes in the amount of surface water in any water body or creation of a new water body? | | X | | | | |
| e. Exposure of people or property to water related hazards such as flooding? | | X | | | | |
| f. Changes in the quality of groundwater? | | X | | | | |
| g. Changes in the quantity of groundwater? | | X | | | | |
| h. Increase in risk of contamination of surface or groundwater? | | X | | | | |
| i. Effects on any existing water right or reservation? | | X | | | | |
| j. Effects on other water users as a result of any alteration in surface or groundwater quality? | | X | | | | |
| k. Effects on other users as a result of any alteration in surface or groundwater quantity? | | X | | | | |
| l. Will the project affect a designated floodplain? (Also see 3c.) | | | X | | | 3l. |
| m. Will the project result in any discharge that will affect federal or state water quality regulations? (Also see 3a.) | | X | | | | |
| n. Other: | | X | | | | |

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Water Resources (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

3l. This tract will include a portion of the floodplain and will be protected by statewide floodplain regulations under state ownership/easement holding.

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

*** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

**** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

| 4. VEGETATION Will the proposed action result in? | IMPACT * | | | | Can Impact Be Mitigated * | Comment Index |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|------|------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------|
| | Unknown * | None | Minor * | Potentially Significant | | |
| a. Changes in the diversity, productivity or abundance of plant species (including trees, shrubs, grass, crops, and aquatic plants)? | | X | | | | |
| b. Alteration of a plant community? | | X | | | | |
| c. Adverse effects on any unique, rare, threatened, or endangered species? | | X | | | | |
| d. Reduction in acreage or productivity of any agricultural land? | | X | | | | |
| e. Establishment or spread of noxious weeds? | | | X | | Yes | 4e. |
| f. Will the project affect wetlands, or prime and unique farmland? | | | X | | | 4f. |
| g. Other: | | X | | | | |

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Vegetation (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

4e. Weeds will be removed in accordance with the revised Region 7 Weed Management Plan and Treasure County Weed Board, using mechanical, chemical or biological methods.

4f. This area is not considered unique farmlands, though wetlands are likely to occur along the river. The tracts have not been surveyed for wetlands since the lands will be afforded wetland protection under state ownership and federal laws.

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

*** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

**** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

| ** 5. <u>FISH/WILDLIFE</u> Will the proposed action result in: | IMPACT * | | | | Can Impact Be Mitigated * | Comment Index |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|-------------|----------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| | Unknown * | None | Minor * | Potentially Significant | | |
| a. Deterioration of critical fish or wildlife habitat? | | X | | | | |
| b. Changes in the diversity or abundance of game animals or bird species? | | X | | | | |
| c. Changes in the diversity or abundance of nongame species? | | X | | | | |
| d. Introduction of new species into an area? | | X | | | | |
| e. Creation of a barrier to the migration or movement of animals? | | X | | | | |
| f. Adverse effects on any unique, rare, threatened, or endangered species? | | X | | | | |
| g. Increase in conditions that stress wildlife populations or limit abundance (including harassment, legal or illegal harvest or other human activity)? | | X | | | | |
| H. Will the project be performed in any area in which T&E species are present, and will the project affect any T&E species or their habitat? (Also see 5f.) | | | x | | | |
| i. Will the project introduce or export any species not presently or historically occurring in the receiving location? (Also see 5d.) | | X | | | | |
| j. Other: | | X | | | | |

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Fish and Wildlife (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

H. The Montana Natural Heritage Program (MNHP) located four species of concern within this geographic location: two bird species (Greater Sage-grouse and Bald Eagle) and 2 fish species (blue sucker and Sauger). Ownership and management by MFWP would ensure that human use of the proposed FAS would be managed in accordance with regulations that protect habitat and wildlife populations while providing public access. Therefore, it is reasonable to expect that habitat and the diversity of game and non-game animals would improve to a minor degree because of this action.

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

*** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

**** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

B. HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

| 6. <u>NOISE/ELECTRICAL EFFECTS</u> Will the proposed action result in: | IMPACT * | | | | Can Impact Be Mitigated * | Comment Index |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|------|---------|-------------------------|---------------------------|---------------|
| | Unknown * | None | Minor * | Potentially Significant | | |
| a. Increases in existing noise levels? | | X | | | | |
| b. Exposure of people to serve or nuisance noise levels? | | X | | | | |
| c. Creation of electrostatic or electromagnetic effects that could be detrimental to human health or property? | | X | | | | |
| d. Interference with radio or television reception and operation? | | X | | | | |
| e. Other: | | X | | | | |

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Noise/Electrical Effects (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

| 7. <u>LAND USE</u> Will the proposed action result in: | IMPACT * | | | | Can Impact Be Mitigated * | Comment Index |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|------|---------|-------------------------|---------------------------|---------------|
| | Unknown * | None | Minor * | Potentially Significant | | |
| a. Alteration of or interference with the productivity or profitability of the existing land use of an area? | | X | | | | |
| b. Conflicted with a designated natural area or area of unusual scientific or educational importance? | | X | | | | |
| c. Conflict with any existing land use whose presence would constrain or potentially prohibit the proposed action? | | X | | | | |
| d. Adverse effects on or relocation of residences? | | X | | | | |
| e. Other: | | X | | | | |

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Use (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

*** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

**** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

| 8. <u>RISK/HEALTH HAZARDS</u> | IMPACT * | | | | Can Impact Be Mitigated * | Comment Index |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|------|---------|-------------------------|---------------------------|---------------|
| | Unknown * | None | Minor * | Potentially Significant | | |
| Will the proposed action result in: | | | | | | |
| a. Risk of an explosion or release of hazardous substances (including, but not limited to oil, pesticides, chemicals, or radiation) in the event of an accident or other forms of disruption? | | X | | | | |
| b. Affect an existing emergency response or emergency evacuation plan, or create a need for a new plan? | | X | | | | |
| c. Creation of any human health hazard or potential hazard? | | X | | | | |
| d. Will any chemical toxicants be used? (Also see 8a) | | | X | | yes | 8d. |
| e. Other: | | X | | | | |

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Risk/Health Hazards (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

8d. The FWP Region 7 Weed Management Plan calls for an integrated method of managing weeds, including the use of herbicides. The use of weed controlling chemicals will be in compliance with application guidelines and by people trained in safe handling techniques to limit the possibility of an accidental spill. Weeds could also be controlled using mechanical or biological means in certain areas to reduce the risk of chemical spills.

| 9. <u>COMMUNITY IMPACT</u> | IMPACT * | | | | Can Impact Be Mitigated * | Comment Index |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|------|---------|-------------------------|---------------------------|---------------|
| | Unknown * | None | Minor * | Potentially Significant | | |
| Will the proposed action result in: | | | | | | |
| a. Alteration of the location, distribution, density, or growth rate of the human population of an area? | | X | | | | |
| b. Alteration of the social structure of a community? | | X | | | | |
| c. Alteration of the level or distribution of employment or community or personal income? | | X | | | | |
| d. Changes in industrial or commercial activity? | | X | | | | |
| e. Increased traffic hazards or effects on existing transportation facilities or patterns of movement of people and goods? | | X | | | | |
| f. Other: | | X | | | | |

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Community Impact (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

*** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

**** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

| 10. <u>PUBLIC SERVICES/TAXES/UTILITIES</u> Will the proposed action result in: | IMPACT * | | | | Can Impact Be Mitigated * | Comment Index |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|------|---------|----------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------|
| | Unknown * | None | Minor * | Potentially Significant | | |
| a. Will the proposed action have an effect upon or result in a need for new or altered governmental services in any of the following areas: fire or police protection, schools, parks/recreational facilities, roads or other public maintenance, water supply, sewer or septic systems, solid waste disposal, health, or other governmental services? If any, specify: <u>public maintenance, solid waste disposal</u> | | | X | | yes | 10a. |
| b. Will the proposed action have an effect upon the local or state tax base and revenues? | | X | | | | 10b. |
| c. Will the proposed action result in a need for new facilities or substantial alterations of any of the following utilities: electric power, natural gas, other fuel supply or distribution systems, or communications? | | X | | | | |
| d. Will the proposed action result in increased use of any energy source? | | X | | | | |
| e. Define projected revenue sources | | | | | | 10e. |
| f. Define projected maintenance costs. | | | | | | 10f. |
| g. Other: | | X | | | | |

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Public Services/Taxes/Utilities (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

10a. These tracts will be maintained in an undeveloped nature for the near future and therefore the increase in governmental services will minimally increase. By assuming management responsibilities of these tracts, FWP will see an increase in site patrol for litter and unauthorized activities. A pack-in/pack-out policy is common at FASs across the state, as would be the case at these tracts. A caretaker position is in place for many other Yellowstone River sites owned by FWP and these tracts can easily be incorporated into the route and position duties.

10b. FWP makes payments to counties in lieu of taxes for FASs owned in that county; assessments are equal to taxes assessed to private lands (unless the agency owns less than 100 acres in that county, 87-1-603, MCA, under which circumstances lands are exempt).

10e. These tracts will not directly generate any revenue, though they provide access to anglers who purchase fishing licenses. A portion of every fishing license is appropriated to fund FAS acquisitions, operations and maintenance. Parks and recreation related funds come from a variety of sources to fund operations and maintenance.

10f. Maintenance costs in the present undeveloped state of these tracts will be minimal and will come from the FWP Region 7 budget.

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

*** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

**** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

| ** 11. <u>AESTHETICS/RECREATION</u> Will the proposed action result in: | IMPACT * | | | | Can Impact Be Mitigated * | Comment Index |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|-------------|----------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| | Unknown * | None | Minor * | Potentially Significant | | |
| a. Alteration of any scenic vista or creation of an aesthetically offensive site or effect that is open to public view? | | X | | | | |
| b. Alteration of the aesthetic character of a community or neighborhood? | | X | | | | |
| c. Alteration of the quality or quantity of recreational/tourism opportunities and settings? (Attach Tourism Report.) | | X | | | | 11c. |
| d. Will any designated or proposed wild or scenic rivers, trails or wilderness areas be impacted? (Also see 11a, 11c.) | | X | | | | |
| e. Other: | | | | | | |

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Aesthetics/Recreation (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

11c. The acquisition of this tract by FWP will not alter the use of these tracts; it will ensure the continued public access to this tract. The proposed action will ensure that the quality and quantity of recreational opportunities remain at levels that accommodate the public demand.

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

*** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

**** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

| 12. <u>CULTURAL/HISTORICAL RESOURCES</u> Will the proposed action result in: | IMPACT * | | | | Can Impact Be Mitigated * | Comment Index |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|------|---------|----------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------|
| | Unknown * | None | Minor * | Potentially Significant | | |
| a. Destruction or alteration of any site, structure or object of prehistoric historic, or paleontological importance? | | X | | | | 12a. |
| b. Physical change that would affect unique cultural values? | | X | | | | |
| c. Effects on existing religious or sacred uses of a site or area? | | X | | | | |
| d. Will the project affect historic or cultural resources? Attach SHPO letter of clearance. (Also see 12.a.) | | X | | | | 12d. |
| e. Other: | | X | | | | |

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Cultural/Historical Resources (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

12a. No site development is planned at this time; Therefore, the tract will not be altered, nor will cultural sites, if any, be altered by a change in ownership or management.

12d. Concurrence from the State Historic Preservation Office has not been requested at this time because transferring private property into state agency ownership affords greater protection to historic and cultural resources than when under private ownership, and no construction is planned at this time.

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

*** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

**** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

| 13. <u>SUMMARY EVALUATION OF SIGNIFICANCE</u> Will the proposed action, considered as a whole: | IMPACT * | | | | Can Impact Be Mitigated * | Comment Index |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|------|---------|----------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------|
| | Unknown * | None | Minor * | Potentially Significant | | |
| a. Have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (A project or program may result in impacts on two or more separate resources that create a significant effect when considered together or in total.) | | X | | | | |
| b. Involve potential risks or adverse effects, which are uncertain but extremely hazardous if they were to occur? | | X | | | | |
| c. Potentially conflict with the substantive requirements of any local, state, or federal law, regulation, standard or formal plan? | | X | | | | |
| d. Establish a precedent or likelihood that future actions with significant environmental impacts will be proposed? | | X | | | | |
| e. Generate substantial debate or controversy about the nature of the impacts that would be created? | | X | | | | |
| f. Is the project expected to have organized opposition or generate substantial public controversy? (Also see 13e.) | | X | | | | |
| g. List any federal or state permits required. | | x | | | | |

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Significance Criteria (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

09/03 sed

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

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